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death were not clear and definite: and as it was known that Mr. Petherick was a man of great endurance, he might have gone through great difficulties; at all events, whatever might be the result, we should soon have our anxieties set at rest.

Mr. GALTON doubted whether the source of the Nile would have been found in the Lake Nyanza. The reported size of that river above Gondókoro appeared to him too small to be commensurate with so great a source.

The PRESIDENT stated that in the year 1848, before the Lake Nyanza was discovered, and before the altitude of the great range of the Snowy Mountains was ascertained, Dr. Beke called attention to the possibility of discovering the sources of the Nile by another route, to come out at Sennaár, on the Blue Nile, and also to the possibility of there being a ridge at the northern end of the lake Victoria Nyanza, which would throw off the waters in the direction to which Mr. Galton had alluded.

Dr. BEKE said his idea was first conceived in 1846, that the sources of the Nile should be sought by entering from the coast in the neighbourhood of Zanzibar, and penetrating into the interior—in short, by taking very nearly the route which Captains Speke and Grant had followed. He himself had set on foot an expedition in 1848, which reached Zanzibar, but went no further. He believed that Claudius Ptolemy, the geographer of the second century, knew nearly as much of the sources of the Nile as we were likely to know in a few days. That writer described the snowy Mountains of the Moon as being to the west of the "Barbarian Gulf," near Zanzibar, round which dwelt the Cannibal Negroes, and said that beyond that were the two lakes of the Nile, which received the melted snows from the Mountains of the Moon. Dr. Beke further stated that he had founded his views upon this text of Ptolemy, and substantially they were now confirmed. His opinion was that the mountain-range of Eastern Africa continued to the south of Nyanza; that Captain Speke crossed the ridge in about 35° E. longitude; that the water-parting is to the south of the lake, and not to the north; and that consequently Nyanza drains into the Nile, whether by the river which passes by Gondókoro, or by any other stream, it is impossible to say, till we receive fuller particulars from the travellers. We did not know the longitude of the river at Gondókoro, but we knew that its altitude there is not more than 1700 feet, and that the lake, which is at a very short distance from it, is nearly 4,000 feet. A few days would determine whether his views were right or wrong.

The PRESIDENT, before calling upon Dr. Shaw to read the following communications respecting the most recent journeys in Australia, stated that two of the distinguished explorers of that great continent were then in the room—Mr. Landsborough and Mr. Middleton. Mr. Landsborough, who, as Sir Henry Barkly said, had done more to utilise the colony than any explorer who ever went out, having traversed Australia from north to south, after a previous exploration to the south-west from the Gulf of Carpentaria, had brought before us absolutely the real condition of the "Plains of Promise," and the capability of the land for settlement by Europeans, and for the production of sheep and wool. Mr. Middleton was second in command of the M'Kinlay expedition from South Australia.

The Papers read were—

1. *Extracts of a Despatch from His Excellency Sir George Bowen to His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, in reference to the Colony of Queensland, dated Brisbane, 8th January, 1863.*

"I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit three copies of the Queensland Book Almanack for 1863. The historical and topogra-

phical sketch of the progress and present condition of this colony, including the cotton plantations, therein contained, will be found clear and accurate.

" I would particularly call your Grace's attention to the map accompanying the volumes. It appears that this colony now comprises an area of about 678,000 square miles ; that is, a surface nearly six times greater than that of the United Kingdom, and above three times greater than that of France. It is estimated that the pastoral occupation within our limits already covers a surface about twice larger than that of the British Isles ; and it is rapidly spreading, for the recent explorations of Messrs. Burke, Landsborough, Walker, and M'Kinlay, prove that almost the whole of our vast territory is available for settlement. In other words, Queensland is by far the most extensive in territory, while it is undoubtedly the most favoured in soil and climate, of all the provinces of the British empire.

" They beg to suggest that one of the accompanying volumes should be presented to the Royal Geographical Society ; and that the attention of that body be particularly directed to the prefixed map, as exhibiting the only authentic description of the boundaries and divisions of Queensland which has hitherto, so far as I know, been published."

2. *Extracts of a Despatch from His Excellency Sir H. Barkly to the Duke of Newcastle, in reference to Mr. Landsborough's Expedition, dated Melbourne, 24th August, 1862.*

" AGREEABLY to the instructions in your Grace's despatch of 26th May, No. 31, I placed the watch therewith forwarded, on behalf of the Royal Geographical Society, in the hands of King, the explorer, and have now the honour to transmit a paper containing a copy of the proceedings on the occasion, which were of a very gratifying nature.

" It will be perceived that I availed myself of one of the meetings of the Royal Society of Victoria, under whose auspices the Burke and Wills Expedition was despatched ; and that Mr. Landsborough, the leader of one of the parties sent to its relief, who had just reached Melbourne after a most successful journey from the Gulf of Carpentaria, happened fortunately to be present, and added additional interest to the same.

" I stated when I last wrote that Mr. Walker had started on 20th December from the dépôt on the Albert River, with the view of following up the tracks of Burke and his companions, which he had